

# 101! *City sweats out record high*

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**By Monette M. Goodrich**

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The first day of summer in Wisconsin has a normal high temperature in the upper 70s to low 80s:

The high in Madison was 101 on Monday, the first day of summer. So much for normalcy.

That stifling, sweltering high at 4:30 p.m. broke a 55-year record of 97 from the 1933 "Dust Bowl" drought.

It had been almost 12 years since the temperature had reached 100 or higher in Madison; the last time was July 14, 1977, at 102, according to the National Weather Service.

The record-breaking heat punctuated the 39th straight day without measurable rain in Madison. Little rain has fallen throughout Wisconsin

in that period, and the drought has all but decimated state crops.

And there is no relief in sight. No rain is expected today, and a high in the mid-90s is expected in Madison.

On Monday afternoon, Wisconsin Power and Light Co., which provides electricity to most of south-central Wisconsin, but not Madison and some suburbs, set a record for one day's use, so it was evident that big energy users, namely air conditioners, fans, refrigerators, and freezers, were running a lot.

At 2 p.m. on Monday, usage leaped to 1,636 megawatts (1,636,000 kilowatts), the largest energy usage in the company's history. One megawatt of power can service 230 homes with central air conditioning, said Dick

**39 days . . .**

**. . . since Madison's last measurable rain, according to the state climatologist.**

Greffin, a spokesman for WPL.

The Madison Gas and Electric Co., which serves Madison and many of its suburbs, generated 475 megawatts of electricity by 5 p.m. Monday, just 2 megawatts short of the record set in July last year.

Regardless of whether one enjoys the comfort of air conditioning or tolerates the misery of fanned hot air, everyone's electricity bill will increase, Greffin said.

Over the past weeks, hydro-pow-

ered electricity output has decreased 50 percent because river-water levels are lower than normal and cannot produce as much energy. To combat the loss of hydro-power, emergency generators, called peaking units, are used to produce the additional electricity needed on high usage days.

Although peaking units use the more expensive gas and oil to produce electricity, the consumer's charge per kilowatt hour will equal the normal coal or nuclear generated electricity rate. However, the increase in kilowatt usage will drive all rates higher during the sweltering heat.

The National Weather Service said an observer at Holy Hill, 20 miles northwest of Milwaukee, reported a

high of 100. Other points that reached or surpassed the 100-degree mark included Friendship, Poynette, Wautoma and Lone Rock.

Other highs included 99 at La Crosse, 98 at Green Bay, 96 at Eau Claire and 93 at Wausau.

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